

AMENDMENT

Serial No. 10/804,736

Docket No. ECI06-GN017

In the Claims:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A spill-proof beverage dispenser comprising:
 - a container adapted to at least partially define an interior volume available for occupation by a liquid;
 - a lid adapted to be mounted to the container, the lid including a vent and a dispensing opening, and the lid including a liquid conduit having a passageway therethrough in fluid communication with the liquid within the container and selective fluid communication with the dispensing opening; and
 - a valve assembly mountable to the lid including a collapsible tower adapted to be received at least partially within the liquid conduit to selectively restrict liquid flow between the interior volume of the container and the dispensing opening, the collapsible tower being responsive to changes in pressure by collapsing at least ~~one~~ a first wall of the collapsible tower before collapsing a second wall to selectively provide fluid communication between the passageway and the dispensing opening.
2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The spill-proof beverage dispenser of claim 1, wherein:
 - the ~~at least one~~ first wall of the collapsible tower spans at least partially the distance between a first arcuate wall and a second arcuate wall of the collapsible tower;
 - and
 - the ~~at least one~~ first wall is substantially linear.
3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The spill-proof beverage dispenser of claim ~~2~~ 1, wherein the collapsible tower is closed at one end opposite the dispensing opening to provide a concavity therein.
4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The spill-proof beverage dispenser of claim ~~3~~ 1, wherein the lid includes a circumferential wall extending therefrom adapted to interface with a depression within the valve assembly to mount the valve assembly to the lid, the circumferential wall and the depression at least partially defining a cavity in fluid communication with the vent.

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5. (ORIGINAL) The spill-proof beverage dispenser of claim 4, wherein:
the circumferential wall includes a flange adapted to be received within a circumferential recess within the depression to provide a snap-fit; and
the depression includes a slit therein.
6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The spill-proof beverage dispenser of claim ~~3~~ 1, wherein the valve assembly includes at least one wing extending laterally ~~therefrom~~ and perpendicularly from the collapsible tower.
7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The spill-proof beverage dispenser of claim ~~3~~ 1, wherein the valve assembly includes a raised circumferential wall spaced from the collapsible tower to form a trench therebetween, the trench being adapted to receive at least a portion of the liquid conduit to mount the valve assembly to the lid via a friction fit.
8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The spill-proof beverage dispenser of claim ~~3~~ 1, wherein:
the liquid conduit receives the collapsible tower therein to provide a friction fit therebetween;
the passageway is a radial passageway through the liquid conduit; and
the radial passageway may be foreclosed, at least in part, by ~~at least the one collapsible first wall, were at least where the one collapsible first wall~~ is reinforced.
9. (ORIGINAL) The spill-proof beverage dispenser of claim 5, wherein the slit and the collapsible tower lie opposite one another along the valve assembly.

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10. (ORIGINAL) A valve assembly for a lid of a container for selectively restricting a beverage within the container from passing outside of the container, thereby inhibiting undesired loss of the beverage, the valve assembly comprising:

a valve seat including a first orifice and a second orifice therethrough, the valve seat adapted to interact with a reinforced section of a valve body to selectively create a fluidic seal therebetween at an interface, the valve body being biased to maintain the fluidic seal at the interface and operative to displace an unaugmented section of the valve body prior to displacement of the reinforced section.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The valve assembly of claim 10, wherein the valve seat is integrated into ~~the~~ a lid of ~~the~~ a container adapted to house ~~the~~ a liquid therein.

12. (ORIGINAL) The valve assembly of claim 11, wherein the valve body comprises a resilient material adapted to be secured to the lid by at least one of a friction fit, a snap-fit, a fastener, a weld, and an adhesive.

13. (ORIGINAL) The valve assembly of claim 12, wherein the first orifice is not coaxial with the second orifice.

14. (ORIGINAL) The valve assembly of claim 13, wherein the valve body comprises a collapsible tower.

15. (ORIGINAL) The valve assembly of claim 14, wherein the valve body includes a coupling adapted to secure the valve body to the valve seat.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A complementary lid and insert for sealing a liquid within a container ~~until~~ until selective extraction, the complementary closure comprising:
a lid adapted to be mounted to a container and provide a fluidic seal therebetween, the lid including an extraction orifice and an entrance orifice, the extraction orifice in communication with a primary conduit of the lid having a radial passageway therethrough; and

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a collapsible tower mounted to a valve assembly and adapted to selectively restrict fluid flow through the radial passageway by collapsing a first wall adjacent to the passageway after a second wall spaced from the passageway collapses, the valve assembly having a raised projection adjacent to the collapsible tower leaving a gap therebetween adapted to receive a friction fit retainer of the lid.

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The complementary closure of claim 16, wherein the primary conduit of the lid comprises a wall that descends from an underneath side of the lid having a generally planar surface approximate the radial passageway.

18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The complementary closure of claim ~~17~~ 16, wherein:
the collapsible tower is adapted to be received within the primary conduit; and
the first wall of the collapsible tower includes a reinforced section.

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The complementary closure of claim ~~18~~ 16, wherein:
~~the primary conduit includes a radial passageway therethrough;~~
~~the radial passageway is selectively opened and closed by the collapsible tower;~~
and
the raised projection is a raised wall at least partially circumscribing the collapsible tower.

20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The complementary closure of claim ~~19~~ 16, wherein:
the collapsible tower comprises a resilient composition; and
~~the reinforced section of the collapsible tower first wall is at least partially~~
~~determinative of the radial passageway being open or closed.~~

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21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The complementary closure of claim 20 ~~16~~, wherein:

the valve assembly includes an opening therethrough adapted to be in fluid communication with the entrance orifice;

the opening includes a slit within a depression within the valve assembly;

the depression includes a recess adapted to receive a projection of a cylindrical wall of the lid to provide a snap-fit mounting the valve assembly to the lid; and

the snap-fit between the recess and the projection ensures a fluidic seal between the valve assembly and lid.

22. (ORIGINAL) The complementary closure of claim 21, wherein:

the valve assembly includes at least one lateral wing; and

the valve assembly includes an orifice therethrough between the depression and the collapsible tower.

23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of regulating the flow of a liquid within a beverage dispenser, the method comprising the steps of:

providing an egress ~~point~~ orifice for liquid contained within a container to exit the container;

providing a displaceable valve responsive to changes in pressure approximate the egress ~~point~~ orifice, the displaceable valve comprising:

a collapsible tower adapted to interface with a primary conduit of the container and be in fluid communication with the egress ~~point~~ orifice, the collapsible tower including a first section having a first flexibility and a second section having a second flexibility, where the first flexibility is greater than the second flexibility, and where the second section selectively seals a passageway otherwise providing fluid communication between the egress point and an interior of the container;

siphoning approximate the egress ~~point~~ orifice to collapse the first section of the collapsible tower before collapsing the second section; and

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siphoning approximate the egress ~~point~~ orifice to collapse the second section ~~along with the first section~~ to open the passageway and provide direct fluid communication between the liquid within the container and the egress ~~point~~ orifice.